



***Church representatives in the grounds of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, for the dedication of the Khachkar memorial to the 1915 Armenian Genocide.***

## **Memorial to Armenian Genocide erected at Christ Church Cathedral Dublin**

A Khachker – a traditional Armenian cross made from volcanic stone – has been erected in the grounds of Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin in a service attended by Christian leaders from across the denominations in Ireland as a memorial to the estimated 1.5 million Armenian Christians who were systematically and brutally murdered by the Ottoman regime in the *Medz Yeghern* – the Great Crime – which took place 100 years ago, beginning in April 1915.

The Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, was joined by the Roman Catholic Archbishop, the Most Revd Diarmuid Martin, the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Revd Brian Anderson and representatives of other denominations for a service on Saturday at which the stone cross was dedicated by Bishop Hovakin Manukyan, the Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of UK and Ireland,

“Christ Church Cathedral lies at the spiritual heart of Dublin. It is the mother church of the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough,” the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, Dean of the Cathedral, said. “The Armenian Church and community are very close to the dioceses and it felt fitting that the Khachkar



***Bishop Hovakim Manukyan and Archbishop Michael Jackson during the dedication of the Khachkar.***

should be located here both as a memorial to the victims of the genocide and as a visible sign of the link between our two Churches”.

“The dedication of the Armenian Cross-Stone in the capital of the Republic of Ireland on the occasion of the centennial of the genocide is an expression of the long lasting connection between our church communities,” Bishop Manukyan said. “The Cross-Stone will remain here as a reminder of our friendship and our commitment to peace as well as a memory to

those who suffered in genocide and in war.”

In a sermon, Archbishop Micheal Jackson spoke of the “route towards expression and recognition of the Armenian Genocide” that the Armenian people had taken over the past 100

“It has brought us today to the point of articulation and expression of immeasurable national suffering and incalculable individual nobility around a long journey involving children, women and men who are the faces and the voices of the Armenian Genocide,” Archbishop Jackson said. “Once the long journey of killing, grieving, rejection and enforced emigration began – every step of the route became precious, every wind in the road became unforgettable and every life lost became irreplaceable.”

The Khachkar is part of the Armenian Christian identity and are generally carved from volcanic stone. The Khachkar which now stands in the grounds of the cathedral was designed by Aram Hakhumvan, who lives in Ireland and carved in Armenia by Arta Hambardzumvan.

It features a Celtic Cross with an Armenian Cross standing out of it and the rest of the stone has

many Irish and Armenian details including shamrocks and grapes. It is the 167th memorial to the Armenian Genocide located in 52 countries around the world.

## **Bishop Colton visits Bandon following the 'Storm Desmond' Floods**

On Monday morning 7th December, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, spent several hours in Bandon, County Cork visiting business people and traders whose properties and livelihoods have been jeopardised by the weekend floods in the town.

The Bishop was accompanied by the Rector of Bandon, the Reverend Denis MacCarthy, and by the Curate, the Reverend David White. As well as meeting the people directly affected, it was an opportunity to meet with members of the community out shopping in the town, as well as local politicians and representatives who were also out and about in the town.

Bishop Colton said, "it is humbling and encouraging to see the community spirit, the stoic determination of those most affected, as



***Pictured cleaning up after the flooding in Bandon over the weekend at McLaughlin's Bandon Medical Hall was John Deasy with his buckets and visiting affected premises was Dr Paul Colton Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross with Bandon Rector, the Rev Denis MacCarthy.***

well as the selfless way people are supporting one another. In particular, I was really thrilled to hear some local business people speaking about how the young people of the town came out in large numbers to assist businesses as the flood waters rose on Saturday evening.

“It was heart-breaking too, however, to meet a parishioner who had opened a new business

only three weeks ago, who had been unable to secure insurance, who has now lost everything.

“Obviously, therefore, there is also fearfulness about the future and real anger, and I add my voice to those in Bandon as they press for the strategic flood defences and drainage works, promised in 2009, to be delivered.”

## **IRA killers at Loughgall ‘died under judgement of God’ - Methodist minister son of murdered policeman**

A methodist minister whose father was gunned down 30 years ago today still believes the IRA killers died under the judgment of God at the hands of the SAS at Loughgall.

News Letter - Yesterday marked the 30th anniversary of an IRA attack which destroyed Ballygawley police station and cost the lives of two police officers.

The IRA shot Constable George Gilliland and reserve Constable William Clements at close



***Rev David Clements, minister in Carrickfergus Methodist Church.***

range at the gates of Ballygawley police station on December 7, 1985.

The terrorists then directed heavy fire at the station and planted a 100lb bomb inside, destroying the building. Three other RUC officers escaped through a back door.

“They took my father’s gun when they shot him, which left my mother greatly distressed,” Rev David Clements of Carrick Methodist Church told the News Letter last night.



“I had prayed two prayers after he was murdered; that they would repent and turn from their violence and then I would forgive them and embrace them – but if they would not, that God would judge them swiftly.

“But then a significant number of the East Tyrone Brigade were killed at Loughgall by the SAS [about a year and half later].

“I was driving along when I heard the news. I just had this deep sense that the people responsible for my father’s murder were dead. My father’s revolver was found among them.”

Rev Clements has expressed his views publicly before and says he still stands by them today.

SAS soldiers opened fire on the eight IRA men who were preparing to bomb Loughgall police station on 8 May 1987.

In September this year it was confirmed that new inquests are to be held into the deaths of the IRA men and a civilian killed in the operation.

Rev Clements said his family got “bogged down” with the Historical Enquiries Team investigation (HET) into his father’s murder, and that the report

was almost finished when the unit was wound up.

He is curious to know if any suspects in the East Tyrone Brigade are still alive.

“I would like the HET report and have written to the Chief Constable about it but have not had a satisfactory reply.”

He does not believe the Christian faith teaches unconditional forgiveness per se.

“For forgiveness to have any real meaning, there needs to be repentance,” he says.

“Christ prayed on the cross ‘forgive them Father for they know not what they do’.

“But that is not unconditional forgiveness, that was to do with his relationship with his Father.

“It depends what the [Roman] soldiers did with that. One centurion said after Christ died - ‘this was surely a righteous man’.

“I believe I will meet that man in heaven as a brother.

“Over the years some journalists have got scoops when widows said right after their husband was murdered - ‘I forgive them’.

“But in nine out of ten cases that is very unhelpful. People say words when in shock but later their feelings change however they feel trapped by their own words.

“If the people who shot my dad repented I would have forgiven them but still expect the courts to send them to jail for 20 years.”

Asked if the line from the Lord’s Prayer “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” suggests unconditional forgiveness is expected of Christians, he replies that “forgiveness entails repentance so it must be conditional on the response of the perpetrator”.

He acknowledges that forgiving killers regardless of whether they repent can have mental health benefits for the victims, and that doing so need not debar the pursuit of justice. But says the issues are complex. He advocates “not being bitter”.

“I am not bitter towards the IRA but that is not the same thing as forgiving them.”

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/ira-killers-at-loughgall-died-under-judgement-of-god-1-7103890#ixzz3tep751aQ>

## **Irish bishops mark fiftieth anniversary of end of Vatican Council**

In a statement on Sunday, the bishops said the Church in Ireland can be grateful for the way the Council opened up new ways of participation in liturgy; new attention to catechesis; new initiatives in ecumenism leading, for instance, to the Inter-Church Meeting.

They also highlighted how it had resulted in the establishment of new realities such as Trócaire, the overseas development agency of the Irish Catholic Church; Mater Dei Institute of Education; the opening of the Catholic Communications Office; the broadcasting of *Radharc*, the award-winning social justice television series; the Liturgy Centre; new youth initiatives; new pastoral outreach; marriage and family agencies, new movements and communities.

They cited pastoral letters published by the Irish bishops for the benefit of the faithful such as *The Work of Justice* (1977).

This Tuesday, 8 December, the Church will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council.

It also coincides with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and with

the opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy called for by Pope Francis.

The bishops have said that as well as giving thanks, the fiftieth anniversary is also a time to review. To consider how the Council been received in Ireland.

“While grateful for many new initiatives, we are all aware of limits and challenges. Some of those on fire with the excitement of the Council have passed away or grown elderly. Today the Church faces new problems unforeseen by Irish bishops in the 1960s. We need to review but without becoming prophets of doom,” they stated on Sunday.

The bishops said on Sunday that the task now is to discern what the Spirit today is saying to the Church.

“What matters is that we be attentive to the Spirit who comes to our aid today to interpret and review. If the Council was an event of the Spirit, it is the same Spirit who helps us interpret accurately the Spirit of the Council. To help us tune into what the Spirit is saying, we have been helped by the wonderful encyclical of Pope

Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)* which was published in 2013.”

They said there is a need to go deeper in taking on board what the Council was about, in particular regarding the “secular” dimension of the Church’s Good News.

The Bishops also see the fiftieth anniversary celebration as a time for the Irish Church to recommit itself to renewal.

They said they recognised that there is “something of an ‘ex-culturation’ going on in Ireland, a distancing from the Christian culture or, at least, from the institutional forms of the Church that generated and nourished our culture for centuries”.

“The Second Vatican Council prepared us for that challenge by offering new perspectives on how to be the Church in the modern world. It is the renewal we all need to rediscover.”

## **Weekend of special memories for the Moderator**

When Dr. and Mrs McNie visited Craigyhill on Sunday it was more like a ‘return’ for the

Moderator and a 'coming home' for his wife Anne.

As a 24-year-old preparing for the ministry at Queen's University and Union Theological College, Dr. McNie was summer assistant at the Larne congregation from 1974 to 1976.

From mid-June to mid-September each year the Moderator supported Craigyhill's minister, Rev. Jackson Buick, over the summer months, speaking and taking services. It was also the place, that he met Anne.

"I think it was at a Sunday evening Youth Fellowship meeting in the church hall that we first met. Anne had been attending Craigyhill all her life and it was the place in 1979, that we were married. So for many different reasons, I am very thankful that God brought me to Craigyhill for that particular time.

"Summer assistantships are the training grounds for parish ministry and I learnt much from Jackson Buick during those summers," Dr. McNie said.

After leaving Craigyhill he became a student assistant at Alexandra Presbyterian Church in

Belfast and then an ordained minister in 1978. Two year's later he was called to his first charge in Kilkeel, where he ministered for 11 years. On Sunday evening Dr. and Mrs. McNie returned where he preached at a service to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Harvest of the Seas services.

“As it was my first charge, returning to Kilkeel, will bring back special memories for us, as our time there saw the birth of our two sons, Peter and Stephen. Those 11 years also coincided with a significant period in Northern Ireland’s history that I am pleased to say is now past, as we ministered and supported a number of families affected by the Troubles during that time.

“In Kilkeel we worked very closely with Mourne Presbyterian Church and its minister, Rev. David McGaughey. When he was elected Moderator in 1994, I was appointed one of his Chaplains,” Dr. McNie said.

Next Sunday will see another poignant return for the Moderator as he preaches in First Antrim Presbyterian Church, the congregation he grew up in and where, aged 13, he “gave his life to Christ.”





## **Roof Repair Fund – second funding round open**

The second funding round of the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund is now open for applications.

The closing date for will be Friday, 26 February at 12 noon.

There have been some changes to the scheme. The key changes are:

- The repair work should be identified in a recent condition survey as being needed within the next two years.
- The fund will consider the repair of spire coverings such as shingles or tiles, in

addition to roofs, tower roofs, cupolas, rainwater disposal and any associated repointing where it forms part of the roof repairs.

- There is more room in the application form to explain the reasons for any restrictions in the accounts of the place of worship and to tell them about opening arrangements.
- There is a reduction in the number of items asked for in the supporting documents

Full details are on the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund website [www.lpowroof.org.uk](http://www.lpowroof.org.uk)

## **Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop hospitalised with subdural haematoma**

Prayers have been asked for the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Revd Michael Curry, after he was hospitalised with a subdural haematoma.

Bishop Curry was visiting Bruton Parish Church in Colonial Williamsburg, in the State of Virginia, yesterday (Sunday) as part of celebrations to



***Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in a still taken from an Episcopal Church video filmed in a Virginia medical centre***

mark the 300th anniversary of the church when a “medical incident” occurred.

He was taken to a local hospital and then transferred to a medical centre in Richmond, Virginia for treatment.

Medical staff treating Bishop Curry say that a subdural haematoma is “a small collection of blood between his brain and his skull. It comes from banging your head – from headbanging,” a nurse said, speaking at Bishop Curry’s request.

“It is a simple thing to fix and we will be working on fixing it [today]. And he should be in great shape probably by the end of the week.”

The nurse stressed that Bishop Curry had not suffered from any kind of brain damage.

“Sometimes you will get some . . . mild confusion. He doesn’t have that. He just has some word-finding difficulty and that resolves just as soon as you take the pressure off and let the blood out.”

In a [video message](#) from his hospital bed, a smiling and joking Bishop Curry said: “I will be back, preaching as normal. But for the next few days I’ll be taking it easy and I’ll be just fine in a few days.

“God bless you. Keep the faith.”

The public affairs office of the Episcopal Church has asked for prayers for Bishop Curry and has circulated a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer:

*O God,  
the strength of the weak and the comfort of  
sufferers:  
Mercifully accept our prayers,  
and grant to your servant Michael the help of*

*your power,  
that his sickness may be turned into health,  
and our sorrow into joy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Media digest

### Dublin church-goers robbed at gunpoint during service

Irish Times

A man remains at large after carrying out an armed robbery at an evangelical **church** service in Ballymun, Dublin. At about 12pm on Sunday the man, ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/dublin-church-goers-robbed-at-gunpoint-during-service-1.2457133>

### Congregation feared ISIS-style terror attack after man walked into church with shotgun shouting ...

Irish Independent

Congregation feared ISIS-style terror attack after man walked into **church** with shotgun .... We have reached the bottom of the barrel with **news** like this. ... which dominated social media around **Ireland's** historic vote to legalise gay ...

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/congregation-feared-isisstyle-terror-attack-after-man-walked-into-church-with-shotgun-shouting-threats-34264998.html>

## **Bethany home survivor in plea to Protestant churches**

Belfast Newsletter

The leadership of the Protestant churches of **Ireland** have to finally accept their historic responsibility as their counterparts in the Catholic **Church** have ...

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/bethany-home-survivor-in-plea-to-protestant-churches-1-7102687>

## **Scale model of Youghal as town appeared in medieval times unveiled**

Irish Examiner

The replica will be mostly displayed in the 13th century St Mary's **Church of Ireland** building “but elsewhere also as required”, says Ms Mulcahy.

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/scale-model-of-youghal-as-town-appeared-in-medieval-times-unveiled-370042.html>

## **Harold Paisley, evangelist brother of Rev Ian Paisley, has died in Canada - News Letter**

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/ian-paisley-s-brother-dies-in-canada-1-7103136>

## **Times (Sun)**

Report that plans by the Archbishop of Canterbury to offer sanctuary to refugees at Lambeth Palace have been stalled by red tape. Lambeth Palace has said it is working with the

Home Office in exploring its participation in the emerging community sponsorship programme.

[http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk\\_news/Society/article1641560.ece](http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Society/article1641560.ece)

### **BBC/Times/Mail/Ind/Guard/Mirror/ITV**

The number of bishops who sit in the House of Lords should be cut to make way for leaders of other faiths, says a new report (see response above and Telegraph comment below). The Woolf Institute's Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life, chaired by Baroness Butler-Sloss, urged a rethink on this and other issues to reflect a "general decline" in Christian affiliation. Articles include comment from CofE. Also see CofE comms blogs below.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-35022517>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4634145.ece>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3348753/>

[This-no-longer-Christian-country-says-judge-Church-s-fury-landmark-study-says-rise-faiths-atheism-means-religion-downgraded.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3348753/This-no-longer-Christian-country-says-judge-Church-s-fury-landmark-study-says-rise-faiths-atheism-means-religion-downgraded.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3348753/This-no-longer-Christian-country-says-judge-Church-s-fury-landmark-study-says-rise-faiths-atheism-means-religion-downgraded.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/bishops-in-house-of-lords-should-make-way-for-leaders-of-other-religions-a6762821.html>

[http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/07/  
key-symbols-of-the-establishment-must-reflect-  
modern-britain-says-report](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/07/key-symbols-of-the-establishment-must-reflect-modern-britain-says-report)

[http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/cut-  
number-church-england-bishops-6966571](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/cut-number-church-england-bishops-6966571)

[http://www.itv.com/news/2015-12-07/report-calls-  
for-fewer-church-of-england-bishops-in-house-of-  
lords/](http://www.itv.com/news/2015-12-07/report-calls-for-fewer-church-of-england-bishops-in-house-of-lords/)

## **Times/Tel**

Families watching television together at Christmas can have an experience as meaningful as attending church says the Bishop of Leeds. Writing in the Radio Times, Nick Baines said that small gestures like this could bring the family together. He went on to compare the shared companionship of relatives watching television together with biblical accounts of the shepherds travelling to see the baby Jesus.

[http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/  
article4634003.ece](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4634003.ece)

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/  
12034287/The-true-meaning-of-Christmas-  
Watching-TV-together-says-bishop.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/12034287/The-true-meaning-of-Christmas-Watching-TV-together-says-bishop.html)

## **Politics Home**

MPs and peers have written a letter to urge Britain's biggest cinema chains to lift their ban on



the Church of England's Lord's Prayer film. The letter said cinema bosses should apologise for their “wholly insensitive” suggestion that the advert could offend people. Last month the cinema chains’ advertising agency Digital Cinema Media refused to show a short film which included the prayer because they believed it might upset audiences.

<https://www.politicshome.com/home-affairs/articles/story/mps-write-cinema-bosses-lift-ban-lords-prayer-ad>

## **Mail**

Original religious shows will make up just four hours of the BBCs 300 hours of festive programming this Christmas - an output which has shrunk considerably from a decade ago. In 2005 the broadcaster aired eight hours of Christian programming on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day alone, the same total that is scheduled over a seven-day period this year.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3348241/BBC-s-Christmas-TV-schedules-include-just-FOUR-hours-original-religious-shows-300-hours-festive-programming.html>

## **BBC**

A light lit from a flame in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem is being brought to Leicestershire in memory of teenager Kayleigh Haywood. Kayleigh, 15, was found dead last month and a 28-year-old man has been charged with her rape and murder. The flame is known as the Peace Light and is carried from Bethlehem to locations around the world in a tradition begun in 1986. It will be received at St Laurence Church in Measham on 15 December.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-35020991>

## **Comment**

**Telegraph:** Charles Moore writes we need more religion in our schools, not less.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12036364/We-need-more-religion-in-our-schools-not-less.html>